A Century of Grace....

1856 - 1956

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Rock Island, Illinois

TO THE TRIUNE GOD, FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT WHO HAS BLESSED US AND KEPT US FOR 100 YEARS

* * *

To the forefathers who courageously planned and zealously worked and sacrificed to establish Immanuel Church and School

To the pastors and teachers who spoke and taught the things "which become sound doctrine"

To the present day members of Immanuel who are heirs not only of the property and buildings, but of the blessings of the Gospel at the close of one hundred years

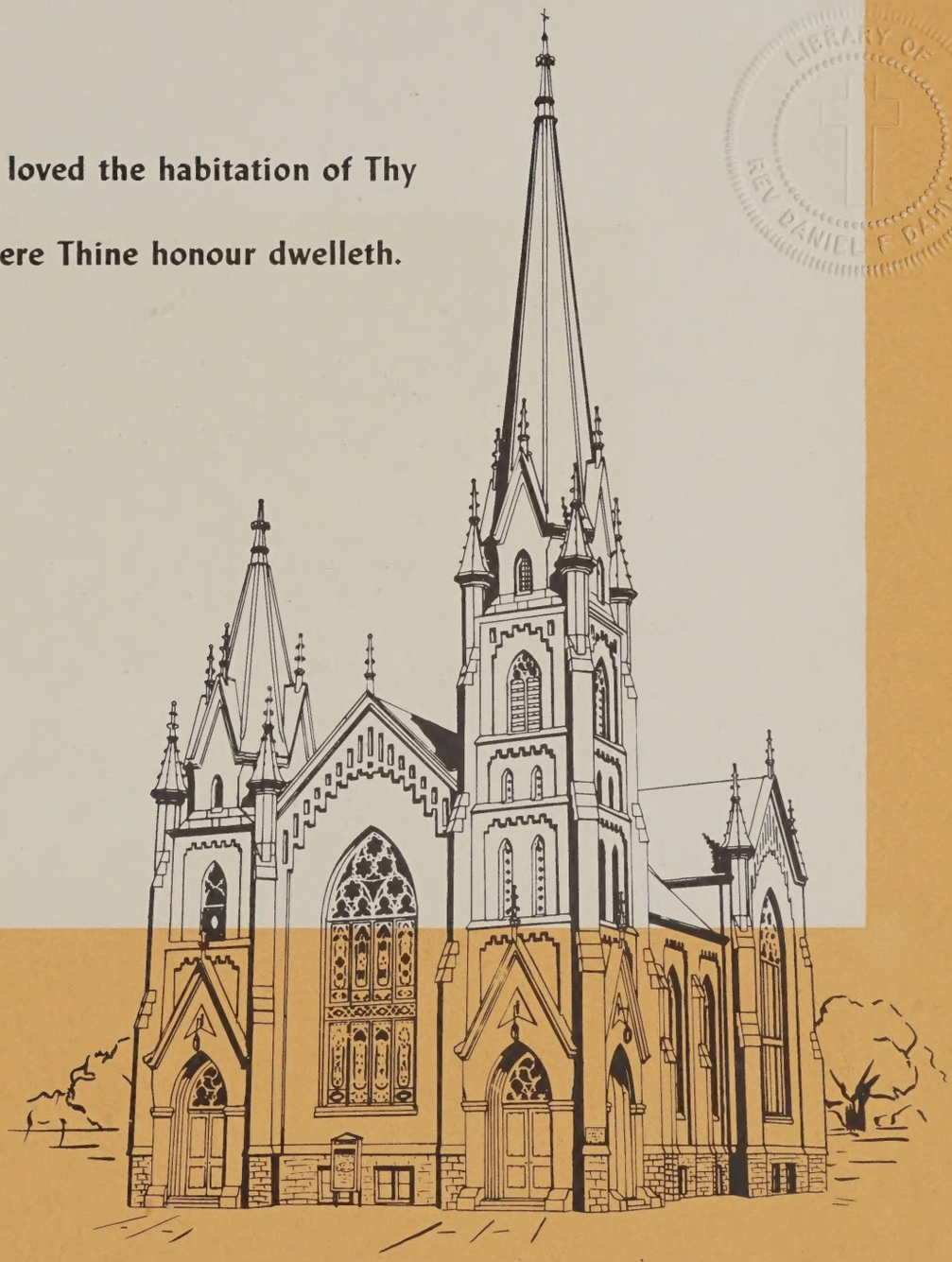
To our children who will under God's grace preserve this rich heritage

This Centennial Review of the life and work of Immanuel Lutheran Church is dedicated.

Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house and the place where Thine honour dwelleth.

Psalm 26, 8.

LIBRARY OF REV DANIEL F DARLING



THE CORNERSTONE of the present church was laid on June 28, 1896, and it was dedicated to the service of the Triune God on the Fourth Sunday of Advent, Dec. 20, 1896.

The church, 102 x 62, was built in pure Gothic style. Its two steeples are 162 ft. and 108 ft. in height. The entire cost of the edifice amounted to $25,000.00. By 1903, the debt on the building was completely liquidated.

The church was completely renovated in 1938.

Historical sketch

As the American frontier pushed to the west, the church found it difficult to keep pace with the westward movement. The area was so large, and there was a shortage of trained pastors. As a result, many people were not served by the church in which they had been trained in their homeland.

This was the situation in Rock Island when Michael Kurz, a German immigrant, moved here with his family in 1855. He had been a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in New York, and was distressed when he found that Germans of Lutheran extraction in Rock Island had no church in which to worship the Lord.

After he had enlisted several men who expressed willingness to establish an Evangelical Lutheran congregation, Mr. Kurz wrote to Prof. C. F. W. Walther in St. Louis explaining the plight of the German Lutherans in the community, and requesting that Prof. Walther assist them in organizing a congregation and obtaining a pastor.

Prof. Walther passed this information along to Pastor G. Schaller, the president of Synod's Western District, which, at that time, embraced the state of Illinois. Pastor Schaller requested that Pastor Selle of Crete, Ill. investigate the situation in Rock Island. Pastor Selle came to Rock Island in April of 1856, held a divine service and discussed the possibility of calling a minister. Seven men unanimously declared themselves willing to extend the call. Soon thereafter, Candidate F. A. Ahner of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis was assigned to the new mission field in Rock Island.

On June 19, 1856, the Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, U. A. C., of Rock Island, Ill. was constituted by the seven men. At the July 6th meeting, the pastor's salary was stipulated at $22.00 per month. The seventeen voting members also decided to open a Christian day school, which the pastor should teach. At first, services were held in a public school on Spencer Square, and then in the Second Presbyterian Church, which was rented for $10.00 per month.

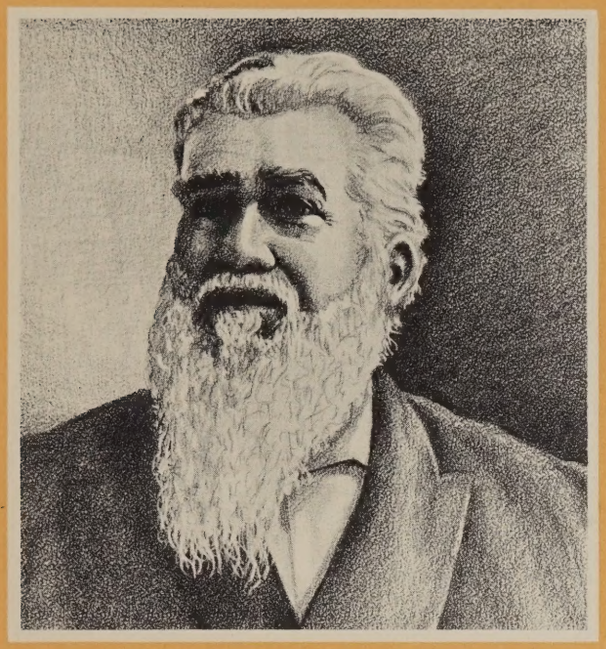
In May, 1857, the small congregation purchased several lots with a double frame building at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Thirteenth Street. Half of the building was to be used for divine services and school and the other half as the parsonage. However, it was found undesirable to conduct divine services on Sunday in the same room in which school was held during the week. Therefore, the congregation decided to build a modest church on its property.

This was a great endeavor for the small congregation, for all members were extremely poor. Construction had to be periodically halted because of lack of funds. Finally, the first church was dedicated on the third Sunday after Easter, 1858. At this time, the congregation had twenty voting members, and a debt on their new building of $1,200.00.

These were extremely hard days for this little flock. The Civil War was raging and the necessities of life were excessively high. The Lord blessed their work and sacrifice, and the congregation continued to grow. It became apparent that a larger church was needed to carry on the work of the Lord.

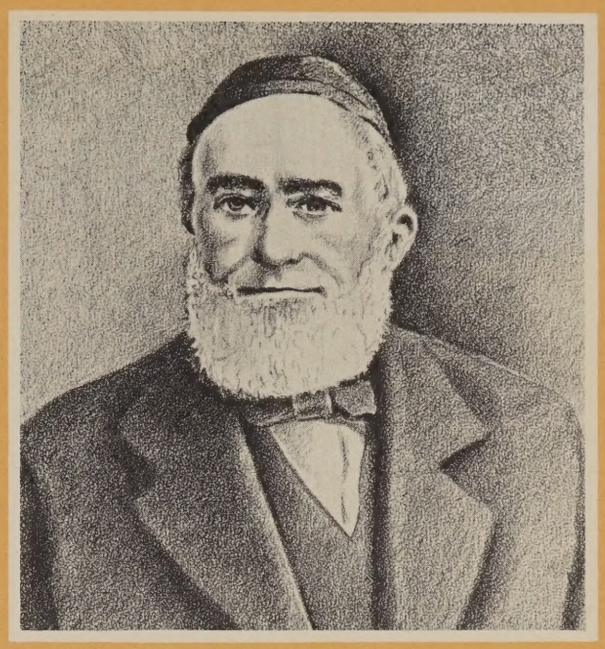
In 1865, the congregation purchased two lots on Fifth Avenue between Nineteenth and Twentieth Streets and also the corner lot on Twentieth Street. On June 10, 1866, the cornerstone of the second church was laid. The dimensions were 40 x 60 ft. with a steeple. The church was completed and dedicated in the late fall, 1866. The building and site cost the congregation $10,000.00. Seven years later, galleries were added to accommodate more people. This building served the congregation until 1896 when it was torn down to make room for the third and present church.

David A. Kruse

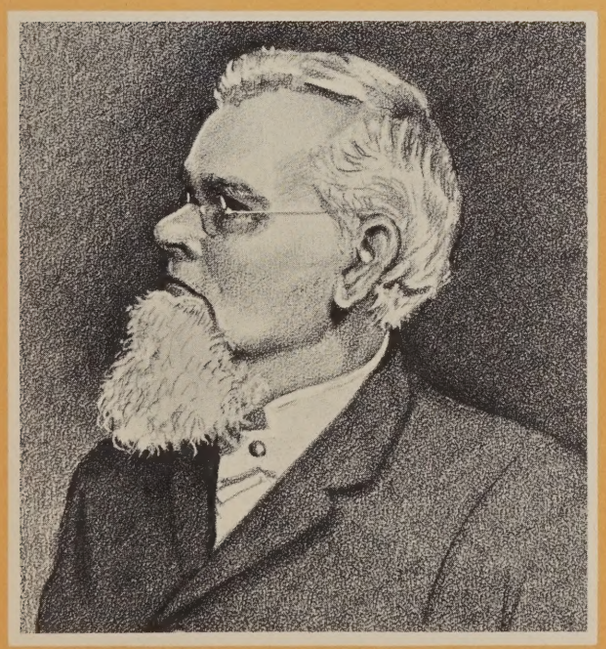


PASTOR F. A. AHNER was the first pastor to serve Immanuel congregation. He arrived in Rock Island in June, 1856 as a candidate from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. On June 29th, the congregation extended a formal call to Candidate Ahner, and he was ordained and installed August 31, 1856.

Pastor Ahner's pastorate in Rock Island was very short. He accepted a call to Cedarburg, Wis. and preached his farewell sermon on Oct. 4, 1857.

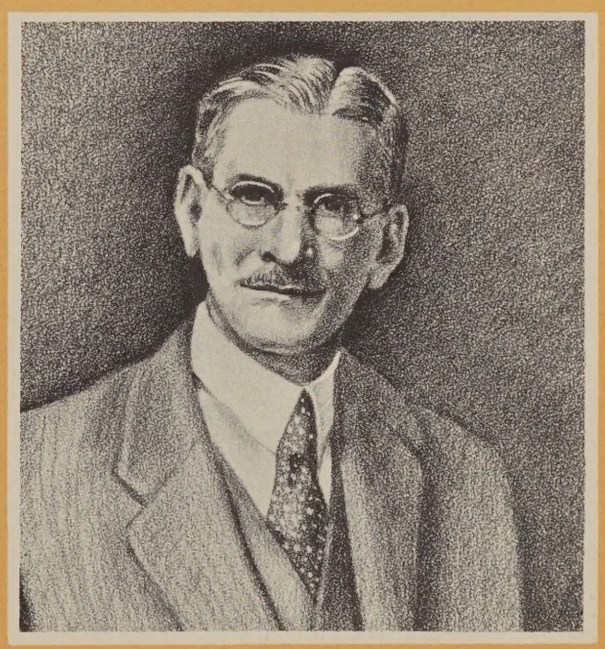


THE REV. C. A. SELLE, the second pastor to serve our congregation, arrived in Rock Island on June 30, 1858 and was installed the following Sunday. He was instrumental in forming congregations in Iowa City, Hampton, Galesburg, and in other communities in Illinois and Iowa. It was through his pursuasive power that the congregation voted unanimously to join Synod in Sept. 1858. He served this congregation for three and a half years when he was called to a professorship at the Teachers' Seminary in Ft. Wayne.



PASTOR C. A. MENNICKE came to Rock Island upon graduation from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He preached his first sermon on Pentecost, 1861. He served this congregation until his death in 1909, a period of almost 48 years. During his pastorate, the congregation outgrew the second church (1866) and erected the present church in 1896. Pastor Mennicke preached and worked to establish churches in Edford Twp., Kewanee, Dubuque, Iowa and Coal Valley.

From the year 1886 until his death, Pastor Mennicke was assisted by his son, August C. Mennicke, 1886-91; Student A. Starck, 1891-92; C. A. Selle, 1893-98; and his son, E. D. Mennicke, 1898-1909.



THE REV. PH. WILHELM was the fourth pastor to serve this congregation. He was installed on July 18, 1909 and faithfully served this congregation until his sudden death on March 7, 1933. During his pastorate, the present parsonage was built in 1912, the school and parish hall in 1918-19 and the gradual transition from the German to the English language took place. Regular Sunday services in both English and German were introduced that all people might hear the "one thing needful." In 1911, Pastor Wilhelm began to preach to a group of Lutherans in East Moline, and in 1917, St. John's Ev. Lutheran congregation of East Moline was organized.

Present Pastor

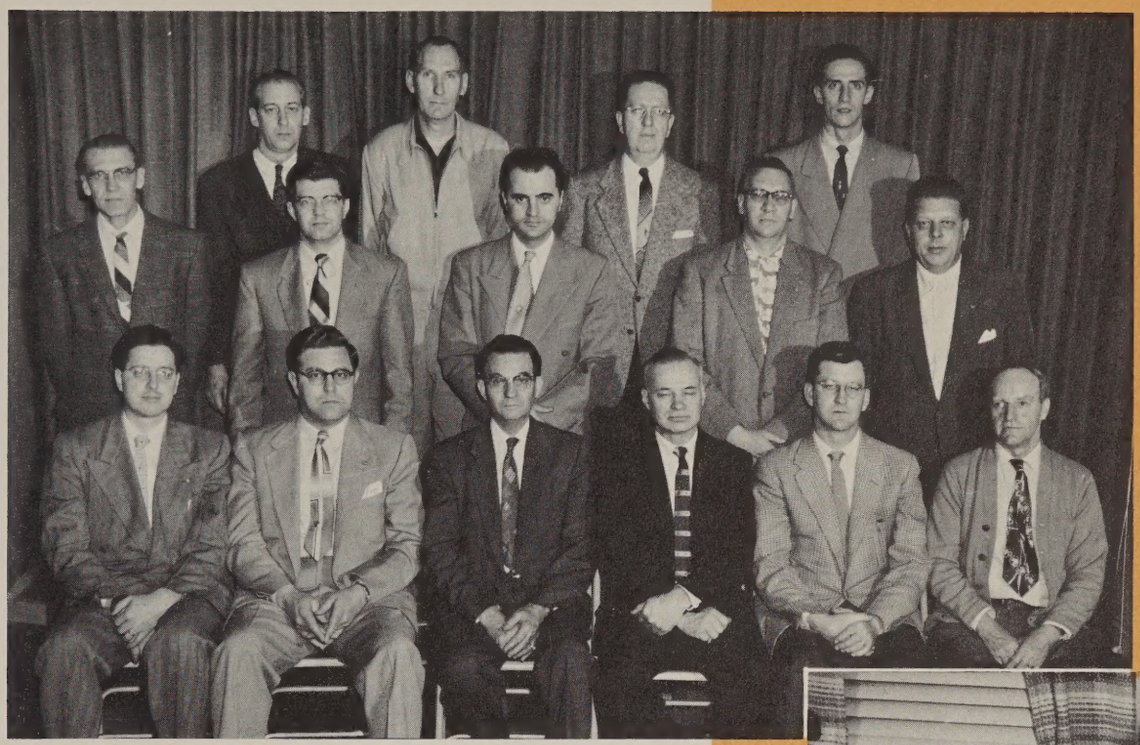
THE PRESENT PASTOR, HERMAN F. C. WETZEL, a graduate of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. in the class of 1923, was installed in this congregation August 27, 1933. He came here from Trinity Lutheran Church, Coal Valley, Ill., where he had been ordained ten years previous, August 26, 1923.

Pastor Wetzel is from a pioneer family in the State of Kansas. The first Lutheran Service in that state was held in his grandfather's log cabin, which has recently been moved to a state roadside park and dedicated as a monument to the beginning of Lutheranism in Kansas.

The Lord has blessed the work of the present pastor, and has permitted us during the last twenty-two years, to see our congregation grow from 650 to 1150 communicant members.

In 1950, Pastor Wetzel saw the need of a church in Moline, and he persuaded the District Board of Directors to call a full time worker into that field where a number of families from our church formed a nucleus for a new mission congregation. Pastor Eldor Haake, who had served Immanuel during his vicarage, was called when he graduated from Concordia Seminary, Springfield. Under his direction Holy Cross Church of Moline was organized.

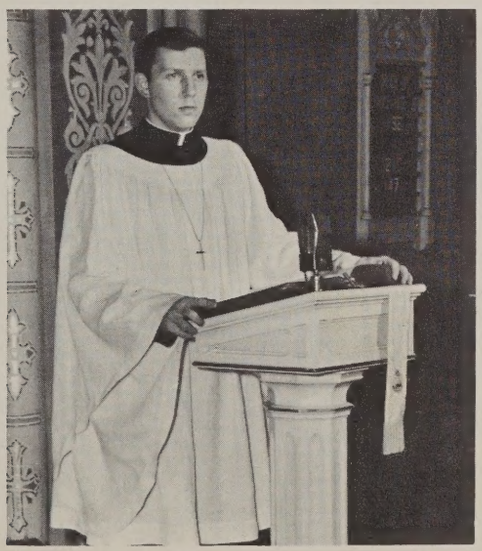
IN THE PARSONAGE — On June 4th, 1924, Pastor Wetzel was united in marriage to Lois Bente, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Frederick Bente of St. Louis, where Dr. Bente served the church as professor of Logic and Symbolics at Concordia Seminary for thirty years. God blessed this marriage with two children. Their daughter, Rhoda, who is now Mrs. Robert Schirmer, lives in Jacksonville, Illinois with her husband and three daughters. Their son, David, married to Constance nee Gerdes lives in Rock Island, where he graduated from Augustana College with the class of 1956.



THE BOARD OF ELDERS — It is the duty of the Board of Elders to assist the Pastor in carrying out the Purposes and Rights of the congregation, and to administer the work in the different fields of Worship, Property, Parish Education, Missions, and Stewardship and Finance. These devoted men are the conceivers of the plans by which we go forward.

The officers of the congregation are: Chairman, Mr. Gilbert Jording; Vice Chairman, Mr. Alwin Lindoerfer; Secretary, Mr. Kenneth Suess; Treasurer, Mr. Arthur Schoessel; Financial Secretary, Mr. Walter Teuscher.

SECRETARY — In August, 1955, Mrs. Elna Wessel succeeded Mrs. Florence Harms as the church secretary. Mrs. Wessel has been a life-long member of Immanuel, and has proved a capable and efficient secretary.



STUDENT PASTOR — Since 1937, the congregation has employed ministerial candidates or theological students to assist Pastor Wetzel. This year, the pastor's assistant is Mr. David Kruse of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

CUSTODIAN — Mr. Fred Jacobsen, assisted by his wife Mrs. Jacobsen, has served as our custodian since August, 1952. His service plays an important part in the proper functioning of Immanuel's church and school.

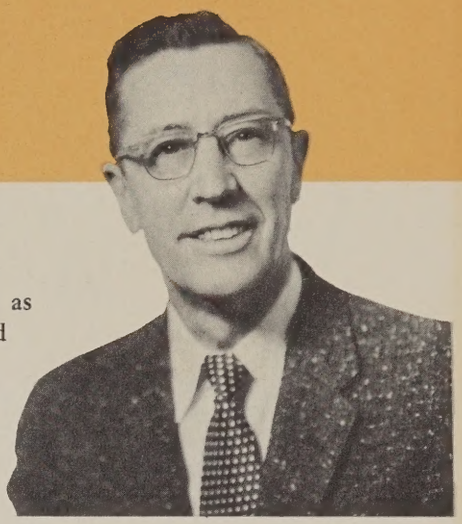
Senior Choir

STIRRING ANTHEMS and chorals by Immanuel's choir have enhanced the beauty of divine services almost from the very beginning of the congregation. The present choir, under the direction of Mr. Arthur Albrecht, has nobly carried on this tradition. Mr. Albrecht has served as choir director since he came to Rock Island in 1921.

Junior Choir

THE JUNIOR CHOIR is made up of the children in the upper four grades of our day school. This choir, organized about 1930 by Mr. Albrecht, not only exists to beautify divine services, but also to train our children to sing unto the Lord.

The School . . .



MR. ARTHUR ALBRECHT, Principal, has served our congregation as teacher, choir director and organist since 1921. Mr. Albrecht graduated from Concordia Teachers' College, Seward, Nebraska in 1912 and taught school in Wellston, Mo. from 1912 until he came to Rock Island. Mr. Albrecht teaches the 7th and 8th grades.

MISS MARGARET MESENBRING joined our staff in 1954. Before coming to Rock Island, Miss Mesenbring served Christian day schools in Greeley, Colorado and Antigo, Wisconsin. Her home is Young America, Minn. and she attended Concordia College, St. Paul, Minn. Miss Mesenbring teaches the first and second grades.

MISS LOIS SCHRAGE, a daughter of our congregation and a graduate of Augustana College, has taught the fifth and sixth grades of our school since she joined our staff in 1954. Before coming to teach in our school, Miss Schrage taught in the public school system in East Moline and in Milan.

MRS. LILLIAN SCHMIDT accepted the position as our kindergarten teacher in Sept., 1955. She and her husband have been members of our congregation approximately eight years. Mrs. Schmidt taught in rural schools in Nebraska for several years.

MISS LAVONA GERCKEN, our third and fourth grade teacher, attended St. John's College, Winfield, Kansas. Her home is Garden City, Kansas. Miss Gercken has been teaching in our school since 1953.

. . . . of the present . . . . . .

When our congregation was organized in 1856, our forefathers immediately decided to start a school for their children. The pastor was to teach school until the congregation was able to call a teacher. On September 1, 1856, Pastor Ahner, the first pastor, opened the school. The enrollment and the place where school was conducted is unknown. The tuition was stipulated at 50c per month per child.

The school was discontinued during the vacancy between Pastor Ahner's and Pastor Selle's pastorates. This was a period of nine months. However, when Pastor Selle arrived, he opened the school in the building on Sixth Avenue. Pastor Selle taught school four days a week, and the tuition of 30c for one child, 50c for two was given to the pastor. Incidentally, the first school picnic was held in 1859.

When Pastor Mennicke arrived in 1861, the school had an enrollment of 20 pupils. His wife taught when pastoral duties made it impossible for the pastor to teach. In October of that year, the congregation discussed the need of calling a teacher.

When the enrollment increased to 50 in the spring of 1862, the congregation sent a call to the Teachers' Seminary. Candidate J. F. Moeller arrived in Rock Island in August, 1862. Teacher Moeller taught in our school for over 40 years.

In 1865, the second teacher was called, and in 1866, when the second church was completed, the congregation maintained two schools. One was held in the old church building and the other in the building adjoining the church. By 1877, the school had an enrollment of 166 pupils.

In May of 1885, the congregation felt the need for a new school. The two-story brick building adjoining the church on 20th Street was completed in December of that year. At present, this building houses the custodian, student pastor, and the church office.

At first, the enrollment in this school was large. However, as the public schools improved, many parents thought it unnecessary to send their children to a Christian day school. Therefore, in subsequent years, the enrollment gradually diminished. Parents also felt that the school was too far away for the small children. To counteract this, the congregation established schools in the "lower" part of the city and on the "bluff," in addition to the school on 20th Street. In 1901, a frame school building was erected on 8th Street between 8th and 9th Avenues. A similar building was erected on 36th St. between 12th and 14th Avenues. At the time when these schools were built, three teachers served the congregation, and each one taught eight grades in one of the three schools. All of these schools flourished for a while, but because the pupils were not advanced far enough to enter high school, the enrollment became very low. Therefore, the school on 20th Street was converted into a two class school. One teacher taught the lower four grades, and the other, the upper four. The schools on 8th St. and 36th St. were maintained until 1916.

In 1918, the congregation decided to build a new school rather than modernize the old building. On August 11, 1918, the cornerstone of the present school and hall was laid. The building was dedicated on January 26, 1919. In 1926, the society room in this building was converted into a third school room. Later, it was found necessary to convert the basement club room into the fourth classroom.

In September, 1954, a kindergarten was added to our eight grades. This class is held in the church basement.

The present enrollment of our school is 184 pupils. It has been necessary for the past several years to turn away the children of prospective members because of the lack of space in the present building.

During the 100 years of our school's existence, many men and women served as teachers. It was found impossible to enumerate all of them in this brief history. We acknowledge their faithful service in bringing up our children in the fear of the Lord. Four of these teachers are still active members of our congregation. They are: Mr. M. W. Lindoerfer, Miss Theodora Bittner, Mrs. William Hatje, and Mrs. Lewis Harms.

. . . looks to the FUTURE!

The need for additional class rooms was felt as early as 1939, and plans were drawn and bids were let for a large class room over the boiler room. However, due to the war, building plans had to be abandoned because of a shortage of material.

In 1949, a survey committee was appointed to investigate the possibility of expanding the present school or of building a new school. In 1954 this committee, with the help of an architect, arrived at the decision that it would be impractical to enlarge the present school building due to a lack of playground and parking space. The congregation agreed with the committee and decided to build on a new site where there would be sufficient room. The committee then asked to be released, with the request that a building committee would be appointed.

In November, 1954, the congregation decided to undertake a fund raising drive for the new school. A campaign for $200,000.00 was begun in July, 1955 under the direction of the Campaign Associates of Kansas City, Mo. When the campaign was completed on September 1st, the congregation had pledged over $255,000.00 for the new school.

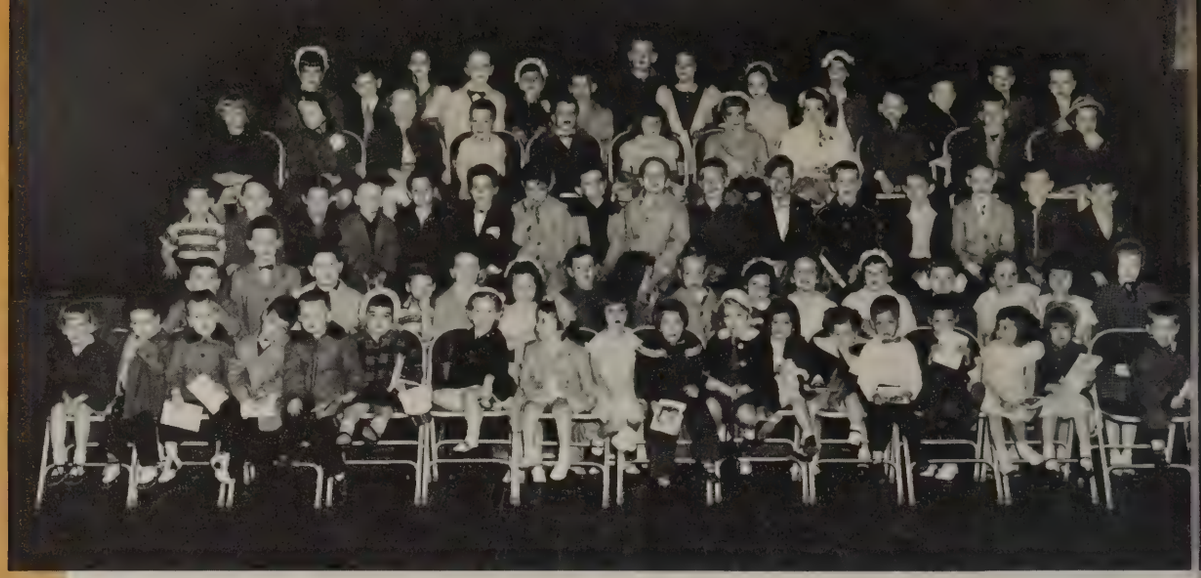
Mr. Gale E. Henderson of St. Louis, Mo. was selected as architect. The building committee has found Mr. Henderson very capable and most cooperative in preparing the plans for the school.

On March 9th, the congregation decided to purchase 13 acres of land on 24th St. near 32nd Ave. as the sight for the school. Here, the congregation has sufficient land for their school, playgrounds, a possible church and any other future expansion. With the Lord's help, we expect our new school to be finished sometime next year.

The Building Committee

Since the building comittee was appointed in 1954, it has worked tirelessly, studying the needs and solving the many problems which arise when such a project is undertaken. Its members have given of both time and talents that, as we enter upon a new century, our rich heritage of Christian Education might be furthered.

Sunday School



SINCE ITS BEGINNING in January, 1915, the Sunday School has played a vital role in the educational and missionary life of the church. Not only does the Sunday School supplement the religious training the youth of our congregation receives in the Day School, but many children and their parents have been won for the church through the Christian training the children received in Sunday School.

Classes are offered for children between the ages of three and fourteen at 9:45 a. m. each Sunday morning. Bible classes are conducted for high school students and for adults.

Sunday School Teachers

AS TEACHERS of our Sunday School, these men and women have a serious responsibility toward God and toward the members of the Sunday School. They assist in the ministry of the Word of God by instructing the lambs of the flock of Jesus Christ. To prepare themselves for this task, the Sunday School teachers meet on the first and third Tuesday of each month to prepare the lessons for the following weeks.

The present officers are: Mr. Arthur Klockau, superintendent; Mrs. Eugene Gindlesparger, primary dept.; Mrs. Donald Jacobsen, secretary; Mrs. John Mackensen, treasurer.

Junior Walther League

THE WALTHER LEAGUE was organized in June, 1909. In 1912, it affiliated with the International Walther League. The object of the League is to help the youth of our congregation to grow up into Christ in all things. To achieve this, every activity, such as Bible study, topics, and recreation, is planned as an opportunity for the expression and promotion of Christian growth.

Mr. E. David Jahns has served as counselor for the past five years. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. All young people of the congregation who have been confirmed and are under eighteen years of age are welcome.

Senior Walther League

THE SENIOR WALTHER LEAGUE, the newest organization in the church, was organized in January of 1955. The League attempts to meet the need of a social organization for those whose age exceeds the Junior League requirements. Although the objects of the Senior and Junior Leagues are much the same, the varied interests of the two groups make the Senior League essential.

Due to the fact that many of the young people in its age group either attend college or are called into the armed service, the growth of the Seniors has been slow. However, its officers and members have worked diligently to make a successful organization.

Ladies' Society

THE LADIES' SOCIETY has the distinction of being the oldest society of its kind in the Missouri Synod. It was founded in 1858 by Pastor C. A. Selle. In May, 1951, the Ladies' Society and the Jr. Ladies' Society, organized in 1914, combined to form one organization.

The Society was formed to aid the work of the congregation in church and school, and to aid students in our institutions of higher learning. In its 98 years, the Ladies' Society has nobly carried on these objectives and its service to the church and school has been outstanding.

The present officers are: President, Mrs. C. A. Schoessel; 1st Vice President, Mrs. Wm. Kleinschmidt; 2nd Vice President, Mrs. Wm. Hatje; Secretary, Mrs. Herbert Sittig; Treasurer, Mrs. Fred Strieter. The Society meets on the second Wednesday of each month.

Altar Guild

IMMANUEL ALTAR GUILD exists so that its members may honor the Lord with the service of their hands.

Organized in 1939, this group has taken the initiative in supplying necessary altar equipment. Skilled needlewomen in the Guild have made all the paraments and linens used in the sanctuary. A committee of two is on altar duty each month and everything is done to maintain a proper and well kept altar.

Business meetings are held the last Friday of each month and one hour is spent on studies pertaining to the church, altar, vestments, and the like. The present officers are: President, Mrs. H. Wetzel, who has held this office since the beginning; Vice-President, Mrs. Carl Krahl; Secretary, Mrs. Bernard Olson.

LWML

On October 9, 1946, The Jr. Ladies' Society as a group, joined the National Lutheran Women's Missionary League. In May, 1950, this group formed a separate organization and took the name of the L. W. M. L. The purpose of the League is the support of missions both home and abroad. Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Moline, Ill., a former district project of the L. W. M. L. is an example of what these mission-minded women accomplish with their prayers and mite boxes. Recently, our local league has undertaken braille writing for the blind and work among the patients in state hospitals.

The officers now serving are: President, Mrs. Arthur Klockau; Vice-President, Mrs. Edith McChesney; Secretary-Treasurer, Miss Lois Schrage. The meetings of the League are held quarterly.

Mission Society

The Mission Society was organized in March, 1879 for the purpose of giving aid to home missions, poor students, and to contribute to the maintenance of our church and school. At first, the meetings were held in the homes of the members and conducted in the German language. For the past several years, the meetings have been held in the church basement on the first Thursday of each month.

The Mission Society has given generously and annually to the congregational treasury with designations for specific institutions of Synod, as well as to theological students of our congregation.

The present officers are: President, Mrs. Henry Stenzel; Vice-President, Mrs. Oscar Larson; Secretary-Treasurer, Mrs. Carl Rexine.

Lutheran Laymen's League

THE LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE of our congregation was organized in 1931. It adopted the constitution of the national L. L. L. The local League has worked to support the Lutheran Hour, sponsored by the national L. L. L., and its other programs in the church at large.

Our local league is a charter member of the district L. L. L. and a member of the Rock Island Circuit. Our League joins the Circuit in sponsoring periodic seminars on topics of vital interest to the Lutheran layman.

Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month. The present officers are: President, Mr. Arthur Klockau; Vice-President, Mr. Gerhardt Wegehaupt; Secretary, Mr. Eugene Gindlesparger; Treasurer, Mr. Arthur Lyons.

Bowling League

The Bowling League, formed in 1919, provides wholesome recreation for the members of the congregation. The eight teams which make up the League bowl Monday through Thursday evenings. The ladies bowl on Friday evenings. The bowling season runs for twenty eight weeks between September and April, concluding with the annual bowlers' banquet.

The League makes the alleys available to the young people on Sunday evenings.

Couples' Club

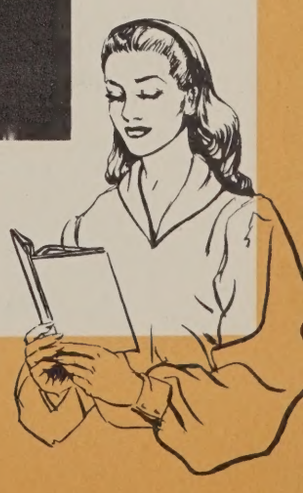
THE COUPLES' CLUB was organized on Nov. 20, 1949. It meets on the third Sunday of each month. The Club offers Christian fellowship to the couples of the congregation and aids in making new members feel at home in the church. In recent years, the Couples' Club has represented the congregation in the city's Marshall Dramatic Contest.

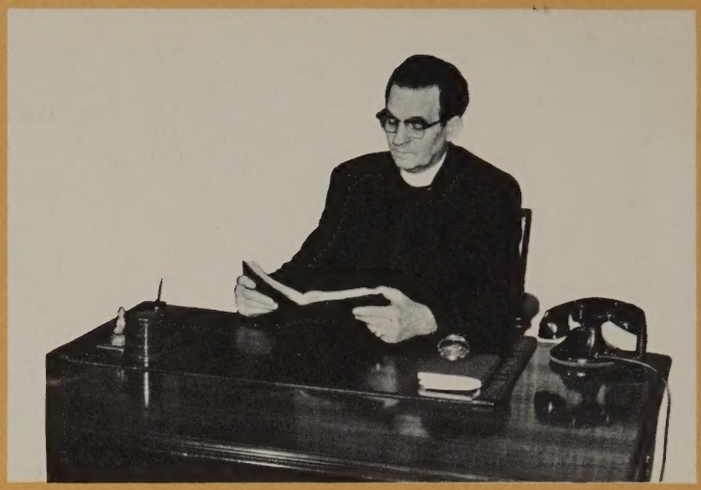
The steering committee consists of the following: Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Houtz, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Albrecht, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Campbell, and Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Wessel.

Centennial Confirmation Class

The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers. Let Him not leave us nor forsake us, that He may incline our hearts unto Him, to walk in all His ways, and to keep His commandments, and His statutes, and His judgments, which He commanded our fathers.

I KINGS 8:57, 58.





Dear Members of Immanuel:

OUR CONGREGATION has the distinction of having had only five regularly called pastors in one hundred years. I consider it a distinct privilege to have had the opportunity to be the pastor of Immanuel for almost the last quarter of the century of grace for which we are thanking God this year. It has been a pleasure to serve you, dear members of Immanuel, and to work with you, in the noblest and most important work in the world.

God has blessed our combined efforts, and has permitted us to see and reap the fruit of our labors. We have grown, not only in numbers; but in spirit and consecration. I believe that Immanuel has more members who have the willingness, and the zeal, and the courage to do the work of the Lord, than she has ever had before. I believe that we have many members who have caught a new vision of the real meaning of membership in the church of God. We have more and more members who are ready to meet the challenge which God is placing before our congregation and our church at large. We have more and more members who are putting first things first — seeking first the Kingdom of God. That readiness and zeal to serve the Lord has manifested itself in many ways in recent years. By the grace of God, our Centennial year has found us strong and eager to do the work of the Lord, and build His Kingdom at home and abroad.

For this we must thank Him from Whom all blessings flow, and we must show our thankfulness, by demonstrating a greater eagerness to hear, to read and to study His Word; by a greater desire to come to the Lord's table; by a more earnest effort to use our time, talents and treasure in His service.

Therefore, let us begin the second century with the determination that we shall worship God more fervently in His temple. Our worship services are the most vital part of our church program. We cannot grow in grace unless we come regularly to worship. True followers of Jesus are found in the Temple praising God. They say with the Psalmist: "I was glad, when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." Ps.122,1.

Let us grow through the study of the Word. Too many pass by opportunities for Bible study. Too few search the Scriptures. Their knowledge of God's Word and God's will remains small and clouded. Come to the Bible classes. Jesus says: "If ye continue in my Word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8,31.32.

Let us grow in consecration and service. Do you mean it when you sing: "Take my life and let it be consecrated Lord to Thee"? That is what God expects. The apostle Paul said: "He died for all that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again." 2 Cor. 5,15. Aren't we all guilty of living too much unto ourselves, thinking of our own ease, comfort, and desires, doing the things we want to do, and like to do, instead of asking what God would have us do? The beginning of a new century on our congregational life, is a good time to evaluate our activities, and to ask ourselves if we are really serving God, or serving self. Even activities in the church are often fostered, unknowingly perhaps, but actually for the purpose of serving self, under the guise of serving God, and building His Kingdom. It is a good time to ask in all sincerity: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

Let us grow in Christian Stewardship. Keep in mind that all we are and have is from God. It belongs to God, and we dare not call it our own. We are only care-takers of His property, whether it be in the form of talents, money or goods. He has a right to tell His stewards what to do with His property. When our God tells us to preach the gospel in all the world, and He then opens one door after the other for us to enter in with the gospel, He is virtually telling us to use a liberal part of that which has been entrusted to us, for the building of His Kingdom. He calls for the liberal support of every one of His children. If we fail to respond, how shall we give an account of our stewardship?

Let us grow in the art of personal evangelism. Be ready to speak to your fellow-men of the hope that is in you. Tell them what Jesus means to you. Tell them of Him who died that we might live with God in heaven eternally. If we fail in this, many souls will be lost. Therefore Jesus says to us: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me."

In order to find the strength and the courage to do the things which God would have us do, let us go more frequently, and more earnestly to the throne of God in prayer. Pray for yourself and for your loved ones, that God may show you His will and the way in which He would have you walk. Pray for your pastor, that God may keep Him in the truth, and give Him the ability and the courage to preach the truth in love, with power and effectiveness; and grant him the judgment to deal wisely in all the affairs and problems of the congregation, and to remain strong, kind, and cheerful amid all trials and difficulties. Pray for your church, and ask God to bless our congregation in the years to come as He has in the years that are gone, that our congregation may continue to grow, not only in numbers; but in grace, in spirit, and in power, that souls may be saved, and our God may be glorified.

Herman F. C. Hetzel

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